

Ex Convict 15

Chapter 15

“Of course, I’ll stay with you. You’re not well, why would I leave?! I’ll lay right here beside you on the floor. Just say the word and I can get you anything you need.”

“This bed can hold two people. Come and lie beside me.” Even he was unaware of the longing look on his face.

Grace bit her lip and hesitated for a while before nodding. “All right.” She lifted up the quilt on the floor and lay down beside him.

She was astonished that she had agreed to sleep beside a man.

His scent enveloped her and his body radiated heat.

Not like a fever, just a warm, healthy body.

“Are you sure I can’t take you to the hospital?” She didn’t think he had insurance, but she could go on a payment plan. The cost was irrelevant, the only thing that mattered was his well-being.

“I’ll be okay,” he assured her. “Just stay with me.”

She held his hand and shifted on her side so she could hold one arm over his body in a loose hug. It was a novel feeling to comfort this man, and for her, it brought into acute awareness how long she’d denied herself any comfort or any connection to another human being.

Sure, she had her friends, and she loved them.

But this... this involved trust, and connecting to someone new. After all that she’d been through, she was glad she hadn’t lost all of her humanity.

She switched off the light and then it was just the two of them, holding each other and quietly breathing.

“Sister, will you stay with me forever?” Jay asked softly

“Of course! In the future, when you get married and have a family, I’ll still keep you company.” Bonds could be forged that were stronger than blood. Hadn’t she learned that? While her own father and half-sister had forsaken her, Jason had shown that he would be there for her. And she would be there for him.

Jason slowly shut his eyes. He felt assured by her voice and the pain gradually lessened.

“Get married...?” he mumbled. Ever since the death of his fiancée, Jason had never thought of getting married. However, Grace was already thinking about that.

“Sister, do you mean what you said?”

“Yes,” she replied.

He made a small sound and then allowed himself to fall asleep.

Early in the morning, when Grace awoke, she lifted her hand to touch Jay's face and forehead. No fever. And his body had stretched out during the night, which made her think that the pain in his stomach must have lessened. He looked peaceful and handsome. His strong, big body took up most of the bed, and though she'd tried to roll away from him to give him more room, even in his sleep, he'd pull her close again.

She edged away now, hoping to let him sleep a while longer.

"Morning." Grace believed that he was no longer in pain.

"Sorry, I woke you up," Grace said. "It's still early. Rest a little longer." As Grace spoke, she hurried off to wash up and get changed.

She set a pot of soup in the slow cooker and set out the medicine on the counter. "Try to eat something. And please don't forget to take your medicine. You have to take it three times a day."

After Grace had given the instructions, she hastily left.

Once again, Jason was left alone in the small apartment.

He buried his face in the spot where she had lain.

He could still smell her, and feel the residual heat of her body on the quilt.

This woman continued to care for him and asked for nothing in return. Only his friendship and company.

He breathed her scent again and his thoughts turned to darker things.

Terrence saw his boss holding a cheap mobile phone. It was an old model, and it wasn't to his boss's usual taste. However, Mr. Reed instructed him to go and get a SIM card. So he did.

Terrence was surprised. But he didn't question his boss's request.

He procured the SIM card in no time and handed it over.

After his boss slotted the SIM card into the mobile phone, he sent a text message. Shortly, the text message alert tone resounded, and his boss, who usually looked cold, smiled after reading the message.

Terrence blinked his eyes in disbelief. He glanced at the sender of the text message from the corner of his eyes and saw the name stated as Sister.

Sister? Mr. Reed was an only child.

Could Grace be the 'sister' whom Mr. Reed was referring to?

In the afternoon, the top management of the Reed Group conducted its quarterly financial meeting. When everybody was listening attentively to the report, Jason's mobile phone suddenly rang.

Everyone saw Jason take out a cheap, old-model mobile phone and answer the call. He put the phone up to his ear and listened to the person speaking on the other end.

“All right, got it. I will remember to eat,” Jason said.

The top management was even more surprised than Terrence, by the way, their boss sounded so gentle over the phone.

“Who is the boss talking to?” William Sharf asked him.

Terrence pretended not to hear the question.

After the call ended, Jason suddenly stood up and said, “I need to go out for a while. Carry on with the meeting.” After saying that, he walked out of the conference room, leaving the top management astounded.

All of them then looked at Terrence.

“Secretary Klein, what happened? Who called the President earlier...?”

Terrence smiled awkwardly. When the President answered the call, he was sitting close to him, so he heard the words “take medicine” on the other end of the line.

Terrence recalled seeing the bottle of medicine on the President’s desk, and he reckoned that Mr. Reed had gone to take the medicine after receiving the call.

Terrence found it unbelievable.

Mr. Reed went to take medicine upon receiving Grace’s call. In the past, Jason wouldn’t have taken medicine unless he was in great pain. And even then, it would be because he felt like it, not because someone told him to.

“This is the President’s private matter,” Terrence said. “Let’s continue with the meeting.” Terrence nodded at the other board members and adhered to the schedule for the duration of the meeting.

Across town, Grace put away her mobile phone and continued to sweep the rubbish on the streets with Claire.

Claire caught her smile and asked, “Who did you call?”

“My younger brother,” Grace replied.

“You have a brother?” Claire asked in amazement. “I never heard you mention it before.”

Grace merely smiled.

After Grace and Claire finished sweeping, they went back to the Sanitation building.

A number of women were staring at the television on the wall, catching the news. It was official, the Stevens and Atkinson families would be united. It was hot celebrity gossip and her coworkers were eating it up. A picture flashed of the beautiful couple. Lily held out her hand, showing off a ginormous pink diamond ring.

“... the six-carat pink diamond ring is exceptionally rare and of the highest quality. The diamond costs around 10,000,000...”

“Lily is a winner,” one of the women said as she stowed her tools. “Lucky girl. Not only is she pretty and rich, but her husband is handsome and wealthy.”

Grace pursed her lips. Yes, they were both attractive and wealthy. But they’d ordered her torture and had stood by and watched as she’d had her fingernails ripped out and bones were broken.

They might be pretty on the outside. But inside, they were ugly.